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gled warning with what seemed rather a rosy view of Great Britain's harvest resources.
The military situation the Premier found encouraging, even satisfactory: 29,000 prisoners captured and 284 guns taken in the Somme offensive and the battle of Arras; not a gun lost for nearly a year. There is no gainsaying the logic of this showing. England is doing her bit, and the Allies have the advantage on the western front.

Nothing was more important in the address than the Premier's allusion to the vexed problem of Ireland. His appeal to all factions "to sink personal and party feeling for the purpose of a settlement" as an essential to "speedy victory" aroused great enthusiasm and made a profound impression. Mr. Lloyd George was right: with Ireland placated and contented the last cloud on the home horizon would disappear and the United Kingdom would become a unit for a supreme effort.

The War Risk Insurance Bureau Must Reverse This Decision.

In the subjoined despatch reprinted from yesterday's newspapers a serious blunder is reported and the adoption of a mistaken policy is announced:

"WASHINGTON, April 27.—The Government decided today not to insure any more sailing vessels bound for the war zone. The risks on this class of craft, it was felt, were too great. Insurance on auxiliary sailing vessels also will be discontinued.
"In announcing the decision, reached upon the recommendation of the advisory board of the War Risk Insurance Bureau, Secretary McAdoo said:
"The board is of the opinion that sailing vessels are unable to protect themselves against the hazards of submarines while passing through the war zones; no reasonable rate can be made."

There are three unanswerable reasons why the Government must not withdraw from any class of merchant ships carrying goods to Europe the protection of the War Risk Insurance Bureau.

The United States must feed our Allies. This is our first and supremely important war obligation. To do it the food must be carried from this country to England and to Europe. The plan for exporting this food in small wooden sailing ships or auxiliary sailing ships was worked out on the sound theory that if such vessels were employed in sufficient numbers enough of them would get through the submarine zone to meet the needs of the civilians and the armies of our Allies.

It was not expected that all the ships sailing from this country would escape the submarines. That many of them would be sunk was assumed. The loss of these ships was reckoned as part of the cost of overcoming the German attempt to win the war by starving England. The loss was counted on in the estimates made when the plan was evolved, and the decision was that the price was worth paying. And whether the proportion of ships lost is large or small, the transport of goods must go forward.

This being the case—and nobody will deny it—the only question remaining to be answered is whether the traffic shall be carried on in ships privately owned or in Government owned vessels. The War Risk Insurance Bureau was created to force reasonable rates on maritime risks. If its protection is withheld from the ship owners who control the cargo carriers that must be had they will insure with other agencies and charge the insurance cost in the freight rates they will get from the Government or from trade generally. In this case the Government will pay directly or indirectly not only the reasonable insurance rate but war profits and expenses. These expenses may not be charged to insurance in the Treasury at Washington, but the cost will come out of that Treasury just the same.

If the Government decides that freight rates swollen by the high insurance rates are extortionate, and decides to forward freight on the terms fixed by ship owners, it will be compelled to buy or charter and operate cargo boats itself. Should it adopt this practice the Government would be obliged to take the whole risk itself. Every penny lost by the destruction of its owned or chartered vessels would fall on the Treasury instead of being divided as insurance divides losses.

The Government must use ships to take food to Europe; if ship owners are held up for extortionate insurance rates the extortion will be passed along to the Government in higher freight rates; if to avoid high rates the Government buys or charters ships for this service it must stand the whole loss itself. But in the War Risk Insurance Bureau the Government has an instrument to prevent extortion, to protect ship owners and to distribute equitably all losses on shipping.

To refuse to use this instrument in the present crisis would be expensive and unbusinesslike. The War Risk Insurance Bureau will not perform its function if it shirks this serious obligation; for we must ship food to our Allies, and sound administration requires that shipping be done under economical and commercially sound conditions.

A Mobile Force of Farm Laborers.

Why would it be impracticable to establish a mobile army of farm workers, paid like the regular army, and subject to orders to send detachments to any point where labor was desperately demanded?

Only so can the real obstacle to utilizing to the fullest the arable land of the nation be removed. Only in that way can farm labor be had when

it is needed, and held in readiness during any lull in the demand.
Every man who has tried to farm in a small way in the vicinity of New York knows that it is the labor shortage that makes his business not merely unprofitable but often impossible. If he has the labor in the spring to plough and sow his fields he has no certainty of help at the time of harvest. The regularity recurring seasons of the ripening of fruits bring the same stories from all over the country—strawberries are left to decay on the ground, peaches and other fruits rot on the trees for lack of men to gather them. And in the cities, perhaps only a score of miles away, these fruits will bring the prices of luxuries suitable only for the tables of the well to do.

Mr. George W. Perkins's idea of an S. O. S.—Soldiers of the Soil—army is capable of useful development. Governments arm and equip monster armies, holding them in well fed idleness for months until the time when they shall be called to battle. Why cannot a fraction of such a number of men be enrolled and held until called to the farms of the nation to save the enormous quantities of foodstuffs—either actual or potential—that might be saved for the people if the labor necessary to its production were available?

It would be a colossal and a costly undertaking, of course, but all the detakings of war are costly and colossal. There seems to be no reason, however, why the best resources of brains and money should be expended upon methods of destruction when all signs indicate that this war is to be won by the group of nations that most successfully encourages production.

Moreover, with the war over such a system of organized and available farmhands would be of incalculable value to the nation in peace.

Supporting the Soldier's Family in the War.

Call it compensation pay, separation pay, dependents' pay, or by any other name, the United States must provide in the soldier's absence for his family or for those who look to him for support. It must be said that a Government which is quick and generous to succor people of other lands in distress has neglected its own people during the war to save civilization.

Americans give their unanimous and cordial approval to the appropriation of money by Congress to avert famine from communities and even great States. In this war they have been ready, if any hard pressed nation of the Allies would accept financial aid, to authorize gifts outright of hundreds of millions of dollars. Large contributions have been made by our people to save the heroic Belgians from famine, and no appeal in behalf of any destitute and starving region in the war area has found Americans wanting in sympathy or slow to respond. Shall we be indifferent to the welfare and security of our own civilian population when its men are fighting on the battlefields of Europe?

The question seems to be superfluous, in fact a reflection upon the good sense of the American people. And yet if the support of dependents is not discussed intelligently and Congress is not made to understand its urgency nothing will be done, or what is done will be inadequate.

Conscripts or volunteers, our soldiers who leave dependents behind them should know that the nation is taking care of them, not in a spirit of mean thrift, but with decent regard for their health and comfort. Our soldiers will be ready to sacrifice life itself for their country; they will suffer the hardest privations; some of them will return crippled and mutilated. What an indelible reproach it would be to America if their wives, children and other dependents, widowed mothers and helpless women folk, were neglected by the Government in the absence of patriotic men called upon to save civilization! How could a nation guilty of the inhumanity call itself civilized?

Conscription, which will be the system of military service adopted, takes the single men and those who have no dependents first, but the number will soon be exhausted in such a war as the United States is now engaged in, with a pledge to employ all its resources to the end, if they shall be required—to the last man able to bear arms. There will be a great many dependents before the war is over, and if conscription signifies that all able bodied men needed at the front shall follow the flag, it also imposes upon the Government an obligation to look after their families. We fear that not enough attention has been given to this obligation, but it must now and hereafter receive the most serious consideration.

It will no doubt be proposed, with a view to keeping the wolf from the door, that a small separate allowance in addition to the soldier's regulation pay, which he will certainly be entitled to for his perilous service, be made for his family, and that private benevolence should do the rest. Against such a shortsighted policy it will be the duty of every honest man to protest. The result would be suffering bordering upon destitution for great numbers of women and children, together with the aged, the infirm and helpless. There should be no charity fund. Nor should employers of labor be expected or obliged to make regular contributions for the support of the families of men at the front. There are many employers who could not afford the steady drain upon their resources; that is to say, they would not be able to maintain a double wage or salary scale. Some dependent families would fare well, others ill. Such support of dependents would be econom-

ically bad, and public opinion should condemn it.
One thing ought to be said on this subject. The United States has profited handsomely in its export trade during this war. It was a rich nation before the first shot was fired. It is incalculably rich now. No nation in the world's history has ever enjoyed such resources in money. Therefore no nation taking part in a war was ever so well prepared to look after the dependents of its soldiers. It is to be a democratic war, men of all stations and occupations being called into service. So it would be a disgrace to America if the democratic principle were not applied to the maintenance of families of our soldiers requiring assistance. It will increase the tax rate of course. To that no decent objection can be made.

Rats and Iguanas in Guam.

The little American island of Guam, in the middle of the Pacific, leaped into light the other day when the cable brought us news of the destruction of the interned German cruiser *Cormoran*. Indeed, the blowing up of this vessel may be regarded as the first shot in the formal conflict between the United States and Germany.

We are indebted to the Hon. WILLIAM B. DAVENPORT of Brooklyn for a copy of the February number of the *Guam News Letter*, which he has just received from Captain Roy C. SMITH, U. S. N., the Governor of the island. This handsome little paper contains much matter of interest.

On February 3 the Governor opened the first session of the Guam Congress, which we take to be a sort of legislative council organized for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the islanders in matters of local administration. Guam has an area of 210 square miles and a native population of 14,000 souls. Fully half of the area is capable of being turned into a veritable garden, and the Governor urges the people to cultivate more land. The island, however, is afflicted by animal pests which constitute a serious obstacle to its agricultural development. These consist of rats and the great lizard known as the iguana. The figures which the Governor gives as to their numbers are quite startling. We quote from his address to the Congress:

"There is one matter you should give your attention to at once, that is the ravages caused by rats and iguanas. These pests are absolutely destructive of young crops as well as young chickens and birds and eggs. Since September last the bounty on rats and iguanas has served to destroy about 135,000 rats and 10,000 iguanas. The present rate is 1,000 rats and 100 iguanas a day. From present appearances there must have been at least a million rats on the island at the start.

"A very simple computation will illustrate the wisdom of the bounty. At the lowest estimate a rat will do 5 cents worth of damage a month, or 60 cents worth a year. The present bounty, which seems to be adequate, is 2 cents; that is, an expenditure of 2 cents to save 60 in a year.

"From another point of view, a million rats would do \$500,000 worth of damage in a year. The taxes collected from the island last year amounted to about \$50,000. That is, the rats probably destroyed property worth ten times all the taxes collected. It seems clear, therefore that this work should go on."

From another part of the *Guam News Letter* we glean the information that the crusade for the extermination of rats and iguanas has thus far, in a period of five months, cost the island government \$3,755.84 in bounties for 142,160 rats and 11,042 iguanas.

The destructiveness of rats is of course well known; but we were not previously aware that the iguana was so objectionable. With a single exception the iguana is the largest of lizards, attaining a length of five feet and a weight of twenty-five pounds. His principal habitat is tropical America, though he is also found in Madagascar and the Fiji Islands. The iguana has a fringe of spines along his back which give him a formidable aspect, but he is in reality a very gentle creature. His flesh is highly valued for food by the inhabitants of the tropics.

In view of the plague of rats thus emphasized by the Governor of Guam it would seem that this insular possession of ours would be a paradise for cats. The good people here at home who want to exterminate our cats because they sometimes kill songbirds might send a shipload of cats to Guam.

"If you are bloodthirsty go and enter," is the sentiment expressed by Speaker CHAMP CLARK in a telegram to a constituent who urged the Speaker to vote for conscription.—*Despatch from Fulton, Mo.*

So a man has to be bloodthirsty to serve his country! The Hon. CHAMP CLARK has lost his temper as well as his head.

The Senate is not so rich in ability that it can afford to lose the Hon. WILLIAM E. BORAH of Idaho. His constituents will have something to say about the announcement he makes that at the end of his present term he will retire from public life.

Guatemala was one of the republics included in the Prussian design for a United States of Central America to humble this country; and Guatemala has joined the other democracies that have severed relations with Germany. The texts submitted must of course be in the Spanish language. The jury that will award the prize is to be composed of the director-general of public instruction, the director of the Normal School for Men, the president of the National Temperance Society, a member of the temperance society elected by the society and one teacher selected from the faculties of the public schools of Lima. The jury will submit its decision to the Government not later than June 30, 1917. The Government reserves the right to reject all manuscripts.

WHAT IS A LIE?

Something to Be Decided Before Arguing as to Its Justification.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: No body seems yet to have settled the question whether it is ever right to lie. Why not analyze it a little more clearly than your other correspondents have done?

To those who recognize no distinction but the signs of a lie, between truth and untruth there is no question. They hold to the most rigid requirements of religion and morality. But which one of these can answer Plato's question, "What is truth?"

A lie is the utterance of an untrue statement. But it is entirely conceivable that the men have been sent to the maximum with rewards, who would offer themselves in crowds for the chance of serving in the war. The Americans now serving in the French and British armies should be recalled and put into the regiments of this corps. It ought to be organized in a month and be in France in the next.

The moral effect of such an expedition would be tremendous, disorganizing the Germans and inspiring the Allies. It would afford the finest possible school of instruction in real war. Picked officers and men, after serving in the field a month or two, should be brought home as instructors for the troops under training here and others detailed to take their places, so that there would be a constant accession of men who had distinguished themselves in the field to our training camps. The new lie would through them receive the best training in actual war.

This course would make us an actual participant in the struggle, and if peace should come before we could send a large army abroad it would give this country a voice in the settlement which otherwise it could not have.

Many of us would like to see the Administration thus far have dealt rather more to much in words and not enough in deeds. Now is the time and the opportunity to make a different record.

One thing is, I think, universally held to be a lie. It is the deliberate breaking of a solemn promise. It is often done and often does happen that one who makes a promise must afterward either break it or utter an untruth with intent to deceive. There may be no other alternative. The predicament is not necessarily such a one as a certain royal personage was in when he was greatly admired for trying to get out of a promise to marry a certain princess.

A truth told with intent to deceive is that also a lie. If so, does guilt attach to the utterance? This is indeed a twister.

Here, then, it may be seen that a far more important question must precede the one your correspondents have been discussing. What is a lie? Surely we should determine that before asking whether it is ever right to tell one.

The wisdom of the nation has thus far failed to furnish an answer to Plato's question. Who, then, can answer the converse query?

We assume certain truths to be self-evident, but it is only an assumption. What remains even in regard to them, may not be also evident in regard to what appears to be a self-evident lie. And does not that doubt send the whole discussion higher up in the air than Gildersleeve's kite?

D. A. C.
New York, April 28.

A HUNT FOR A RECORD.

IF YOU CAN VERIFY THIS CRACK SEA PASSAGE \$100 IS YOURS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I wish to offer a reward of \$100 to any person who first produces evidence from either the memoirs of Captain S. S. Mendenhall or from the Forecastle to the Cabin or from the Post Office records or from any newspaper published during the year 1915 in proof that the United States Fish Commission was in 9 days 17 hours from Sandy Hook during the month of March, 1915.

This offer to remain open for sixty days from date of publication.

ARTHUR H. CLARK,
65 Beaver street,
New York, April 27.

Men's Compensation Is the One Thing That Economy Should Leave Alone.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The warword is economy. Why not start in by reducing "tips?"

D. B. BOON
New York, April 28.

Slugging Rum, Rex, in Peru.

From Commerce Reports.
A law passed by the national Congress of Peru at its last session and approved by the President of the republic on February 10 provides for a prize of \$100 to be awarded to the first person who can furnish a list of names of persons who are engaged in the traffic in rum to teach temperance in the public schools of Peru. Intemperance, especially in the mining regions, is said to be a serious problem in Peru and Bolivia. The introduction of this subject as one prescribed in the curriculum of the primary schools is expected to have important effects.

The conditions governing the prize award are: The author of the book to whom the prize is awarded will receive \$100, half at the time the book is adopted and the remainder on July 28, 1917. The author must be a Peruvian citizen and must be at least 21 years of age at the time the book is submitted.

The text submitted must of course be in the Spanish language. The jury that will award the prize is to be composed of the director-general of public instruction, the director of the Normal School for Men, the president of the National Temperance Society, a member of the temperance society elected by the society and one teacher selected from the faculties of the public schools of Lima. The jury will submit its decision to the Government not later than June 30, 1917. The Government reserves the right to reject all manuscripts.

A CORPS FOR FRANCE.

General Hazard Stevens of Civil War Fame Urges an Expedition.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: As the swiftest and most effective way of striking the enemy and forcing a victory with peace the United States should immediately organize a corps of 60,000 troops and dispatch them to France to serve on the battle front there, side by side with the tri-union.

Nine regular infantry regiments, two regular artillery regiments, eighteen National Guard regiments, with the proper complements of signal, medical, airplane and other attendants, would comprise such a corps. Regiments should be drilled to the maximum with rewards, who would offer themselves in crowds for the chance of serving in the war. The Americans now serving in the French and British armies should be recalled and put into the regiments of this corps. It ought to be organized in a month and be in France in the next.

The moral effect of such an expedition would be tremendous, disorganizing the Germans and inspiring the Allies. It would afford the finest possible school of instruction in real war. Picked officers and men, after serving in the field a month or two, should be brought home as instructors for the troops under training here and others detailed to take their places, so that there would be a constant accession of men who had distinguished themselves in the field to our training camps. The new lie would through them receive the best training in actual war.

This course would make us an actual participant in the struggle, and if peace should come before we could send a large army abroad it would give this country a voice in the settlement which otherwise it could not have.

Many of us would like to see the Administration thus far have dealt rather more to much in words